

June 23, 2008

Dear Judge,

My name is Jennifer Chang and I am Dominic's daughter. I am writing on behalf of my dad to give you a more complete picture of his character and to show you that the mistake that he made was completely out of character.

My dad is a really good person. He's the kind of person that you would want as a friend, because he would bend over backwards to help you, even if he doesn't know you that well. For example, last year he was returning from a trip to Hong Kong and he found himself in a conversation with the girl sitting next to him on the plane. She was a college student in Taiwan, and was traveling to somewhere in middle America to participate in a summer program. She said she wanted to return to San Francisco for a visit at the end of her summer program, before going back to Taiwan. When my father found out she didn't have any ties to the Bay Area, and that she wouldn't be able to afford a car during her proposed visit, he got her contact information so that he could make sure she would be able to make the most of her short time here. When she returned to the Bay Area for her visit, my dad took time off of work to go pick her up from the airport, and treated her and her friends to dinner. He set up hotel accommodations for them in the south bay for a night then drove them up to the city the next day where at his request I had helped arrange accommodations for the girls. My dad went out of his way to help them because he could, and because he knew it would make a difference to them. I have countless stories of my dad lending a helping hand to recent immigrants, customers and friends of all ages and walks of life. I have always known my dad to be the kind of person who would do random acts of kindness and to anticipate other people's times of need.

My dad's generous nature has influenced me to pursue a career path in public interest law. Although my dad doesn't participate in organized public service, he taught me and my brother through his guidance and example to be generous with what we have. As a result, upon graduating from UCSD I spent several months organizing a non-profit festival in Cupertino. Last year, I worked with at-risk youth in East Palo Alto through AmeriCorps. I just finished my first year of law school at Northeastern University where I am a social justice scholar. This summer I am working at the Youth Law Center in San Francisco as a legal intern. Upon graduation I hope to pursue a career as a juvenile defender. These are aspirations I have because I grew up seeing my dad's generosity and I was taught the value of helping those in need.

While my dad is a good person we all make mistakes, especially under extraordinary strain, and the period during which he committed his tax evasion was an especially trying time for him. My parents had just been divorced, and he was suffering a great deal on an emotional level due to his loneliness and isolation. Without my knowledge, his gambling was spinning out of control and he was gradually bankrupting himself as a result. In hindsight, I can recognize that he wasn't being himself, in part because the woman he had turned to for companionship was totally out of character for him. Both my mom and Anne, his second wife, are simple women. They are low maintenance, down-to-earth people of great honesty and integrity. They don't care much about impressing other people on a superficial level because they are self-confident. Linda, the woman he was with from 1999-2000 was the complete opposite. She was a very high-maintenance woman who made a hobby of spending money. My grandmother told me after their inevitable breakup that Linda had been after the money that she thought my dad had and when she realized that he had burned through his savings, she moved on. I heard that she later married a doctor who could meet her financial expectations.

I'm not trying to blame Linda for my dad's decision to cheat on his taxes or for his gambling. That was his own doing, and I know he has to answer for that. I bring up this brief relationship only because for me it says a lot about my dad's emotional fragility in the period after my mother divorced him and his uncharacteristic susceptibility to things he would otherwise instinctively reject as wrong. He is in a different place now. Having hit bottom, he has learned to recognize the temptations that led him to tax fraud and the wrong kinds of people, on the one hand, and also the value of honest companionship with a caring and watchful person like Anne, on the other. Though I may be disappointed in the mistakes he made leading up to this case, I am proud of the progress that he has made since then.

I sincerely hope that you will take these things into consideration. I understand that the government wants to make an example out of my dad to discourage other people from cheating on their taxes. However putting my father in prison would be a great injustice. He has, in his own way, suffered and learned very much as a result of his actions and this case, while his random acts of kindness and generosity have continued to contribute positively to our community.

Sincerely,
/s/
Jennifer Chang